



*PO Box 292 ° Delta, CO 81416-0292 (970) 874-1433 ° (970) 874-4170 fax
cwga wool@aol.com ° coloradosheep.org*

The Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairman
The Honorable Raul Grijalva, Ranking Member
House Committee of Natural Resources

March 21, 2023

Re: SUPPORT for HR764 - Trust the Science Act

Dear House Committee Members:

The Colorado Wool Growers Association (CWGA) appreciates the opportunity to share our support of HR764 - Trust the Science Act.

The CWGA is the largest lamb feeder in the nation, is second in wool production, and ranked third nationally for the total number of sheep and lambs. Our statewide membership operates their farms, ranches, and feedlots on private, state, and federal lands. Our members are significantly impacted by Endangered Species Act (ESA) issues, especially predator species.

The ESA as currently written has manifested into a broken system that is rife with abuse. Case in point, gray wolves. Gray wolves have been biologically recovered for years, and in some places, for decades. Continued federal listing is a money maker for activist groups that bilk money out of donors, and rip off taxpayers by receiving Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) funds for litigation ad nauseam, all while gray wolf populations continue to thrive and expand.

Wolves cause significant harm to livestock, wildlife, and pets, yet the federal listing status makes it very difficult and inefficient to remove depredating wolves. We have decades of data that show that removing problem wolves or entire packs that kill livestock and/or pose a human safety risk has no impact on the overall wolf population and its ability to expand. Activist groups choose to imperil our livestock, other wildlife species, and our rural communities by continuing to keep wolves on an untouchable pedestal. Just last week, two more ranch dogs were killed in Colorado next to their homes, yet the owners are unable to do anything to the federally listed wolf.

Millions of state and federal taxpayer dollars have been spent on wolf “recovery” that could have been spent on species in-peril. It's also obvious that wolves are used as a mechanism to restrict land-use.

For decades, wolves have been used as a fundraising platform to fill the coffers of activist groups that survive on ill-gotten donor dollars as a result of creating strife and drama instead of supporting recovery efforts that balance the needs of wolves, other wildlife species, and rural landowners and businesses that bear the burden of living with wolves.

HR764 is a backstop against the never-ending stream of litigation, as activist groups shop for sympathetic judges that will keep wolves listed (despite sustaining and surpassing recovery goals), and shell out EAJA funds to pay excessive lawyer fees at the expense of the taxpayer. As America is drowning in debt, our federal agencies have a moral obligation to operate efficiently and halt the gravy train that feeds activist groups.

Relisting wolves had nothing to do about wolf biology and recovery, and everything to do with keeping the gravy train supplied with quick cash at the expense of taxpayers, and well-intended but misguided donors.

Let's get this species permanently delisted and stop the wasteful spending on a species that is not only fully recovered but is flourishing.

Respectfully,

Nick Maneotis

President